

Remarks

Entry of the Specification amendments presented, and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested. Claims 1-22 remain pending.

Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowability of claims 2-7, 9-14 & 17-22 if rewritten into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. These claims remain in dependent form, however, since the independent claims from which they directly or ultimately depend are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 15 & 16 were provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 83 of co-pending application Serial No. 09/968,420 A. In response, Applicants have canceled claim 83 from co-pending application Serial No. 09/968,420 A in an amendment mailed to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on November 30, 2004, with a Certificate of Mailing. Since the November 30, 2004 amendment was timely filed with the U.S. Patent Office, and since the amendment canceled claim 83, without prejudice, Applicants have obviated the basis for the double patenting rejection to claims 1, 8, 15 & 16 of the present application. Should the Examiner wish, a copy of the November 30, 2004 response for application Serial No. 09/968,420 A can be provided upon request. However, since the Examiner is also handling that application, Applicants have currently omitted a copy of that response from this paper in order to avoid confusion.

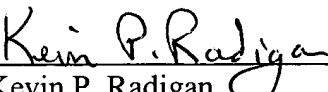
In view of the cancellation of the conflicting claim 83 from application Serial No. 09/968,420 A, the basis for the double patenting rejection is believed removed. Therefore, allowance of claims 1, 8, 15 & 16 in the present application, as well as dependent claims 2-7, 9-14 & 17-22 is respectfully requested.

Applicants have herein amended the specification to provide updated application and patent number information for the cross-referenced related applications and patents. Entrance of these amendments is respectfully requested.

All claims are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss this application further with Applicants' attorney, the Examiner is invited to telephone their below-listed representative.

Respectfully submitted,



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